

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

As an initial matter, Applicants wish to thank Examiner Lavilla for indicating that the previous prior art rejection over the claims has been withdrawn.

The rejection of the claims 1-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is traversed and obviated by amendment, as shown above. Reconsideration of the claimed invention is requested in view of the remarks, which are in view of the Examiners comments and inquiries at paragraphs 5 and 6, at pages 2-3 of the present Office Action.

Regarding the Examiner's comments and inquiries at paragraph 5 of the Office Action, Applicants note that at the manufacture of a Cr-Mo based alloy steel of the present invention, coarse carbides are generated in a metal tissue. The coarse carbides have been considered to disappear in the heat treatment in step S14 of FIG. 8B, but in fact, they do not completely disappear but are left in the metal tissue (FIG. 2(a)). The remaining coarse carbides 12 are dissolved in a tissue matrix by the heat input of welding, crystal grain having high carbon concentration is generated in the fine grained region of the HAZ. In the fine grained region, a creep damage of the type 4 occurs with time.

Thus, it is noted that in the Amendment/RCE filed May 31, 2006, Applicants inserted the wording "so as to reduce an amount of coarse carbides, which cause creep damage of type 4, remaining in the base metal" into Claims 1, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24 to clarify the cause for the creep damage of the type 4. To further clarify cause for the creep damage of the type 4, Applicants have amended the current wording of Claim 1, etc. to recite "so as to reduce an amount of coarse carbides, which have been found to be transformed to be the origin of type 4 creep damage through the weld heat, remained in the base metal passed through the original heat treatment only."

To clarify the processing of removing the coarse carbides, in Claims 1, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24, Applicants have amended the claims to change the phrase "before the welding in addition

to the hot working” to “normalized once or more times in addition to the original heat treatment before the welding.”

Regarding the Examiner’s comments and inquiries at paragraph 6 of the Office Action, Applicants note that Claims 2, 7, 10, 15, 21, 25 have been amended to indicate that the material according to the present invention is subjected to annealing, or normalizing and tempering, i.e., the base metal has been subjected to “annealing” *or* both “normalizing and tempering.” These steps, in the context of the method of the claimed invention, are also described at page 13, line 1 through page 14, line 19 of the present specification.

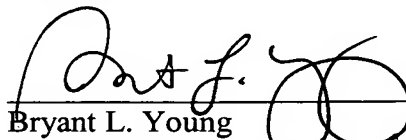
In view of the above remarks and amendments, withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. Early notification of such allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant’s undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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